



DEPARTMENT OF STATE

OFFICE OF THE

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MEMORANDUM FOR DR. ZDIGNIEW BRZEZINSKI
THE WHITE HOUSE

Subject: The President's Meeting with Secretary Vance and Assistant Secretary Patt Derian on the Human Rights Policy, Wednesday, December 6, 1978, at 10:30 a.m.

The President will meet with Secretary Vance and Assistant Secretary Derian to discuss the Administration's human rights policy. They will want to review briefly the guiding principles of the policy as it has developed over the past two years, the effectiveness of tools we have used to implement it, the impact it has had in the United States and abroad, and our outlook for the future.

The Guiding Principles

-- We are concerned with all three categories of fundamental rights: the right to be free from governmental violations of the integrity of the person; the right to fulfill one's vital needs such as shelter, food, health, and education; and civil and political rights.

-- These rights are internationally recognized in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, adopted by the UN in 1948, and other international instruments.

-- We prefer to use positive measures to promote human rights in other countries, but where these have no effect we will not shrink from consideration of sanctions or other ways to distance the United States from human rights violations abroad.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MR

REVIEWED BY

R. Valer

DATE 12/26/84

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ENCLOSURE ☐DECLASSIFIED ☒ UNCLASSIFIED

RELEASE DATE

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-- We apply our human rights concerns flexibly and realistically to the particular circumstances presented by the country in question, taking account of our interests with respect to the country and the historical and cultural conditions involved.

-- We encourage other countries that share our human rights values to join us in our efforts to promote human rights.

Tools for Advancing the Human Rights Policy

-- Private diplomatic discussions with virtually all countries.

-- The Interagency Group on Human Rights and Foreign Assistance, chaired by Warren Christopher, which brings human rights considerations to bear on our foreign assistance projects in accordance with legislative restrictions on providing assistance to countries with serious human rights problems, and in keeping with the Presidential directive to adjust our assistance levels to reflect positive or negative human rights performance.

-- Symbolic acts, such as meeting with opposition leaders or inviting foreign leaders to visit the U.S.

-- Public comment, for countries such as Uganda and Cambodia, where our private diplomatic efforts are unavailable or unavailing.

-- Approaches in multilateral bodies, such as the UN, the OAS, the multilateral development banks, and the Belgrade conference to review implementation of the Helsinki accord.

Impact of the Human Rights Policy

-- There has been an increase in awareness of human rights issues throughout the world, which helps to curb existing abuses and acts as an important deterrent to new violations. There have been releases of many political prisoners in over a dozen countries, and movement toward restoration

of democratic rule by a number of military regimes. We do not take credit for particular improvements but believe we have helped to create an atmosphere in which human rights progress is more likely to occur.

-- At home, the human rights policy is very popular with the public. It is seen as a personal initiative of the President and a strong plus for the Administration. There has been some criticism of the policy from segments of the business community who are concerned that the policy might interfere with trade. Labor is strongly supportive of the policy. Other criticisms sometimes heard are that we concentrate on right-wing, anti-Communist governments and that we do not apply the policy forcefully enough in countries where we have important security interests. The Congress continues to be generally supportive, with the exception of some members who are responsive often to particular business interests among their constituents.

Efforts in the Period Ahead

-- We will continue to implement the policy in accordance with the principles that have guided us thus far. We will work to articulate the basis for the policy to international and domestic audiences.

-- We will address problems that have emerged in implementing the policy to date. Two particular concerns will be our failure to ratify the Genocide Convention and our efforts to improve our ability to respond to complaints and questions about human rights conditions in the United States.



Peter Tarnoff
Executive Secretary